

HB 2654 Technical Assistance (TA) Subgroup Meeting

Subgroup Meeting Notes – June 30, 2008, 9:00 – 10:30 am PDT

Document Purpose: This document summarizes the notes taken during the June 30, 2008 meeting / conference call.

Meeting Attendees: The following people participated in the TA Subgroup meeting: Brad Berry, Mary Jadwisiak, Laura Van Tosh, Andy Keller (facilitator), and Bill Wilson (note taker).

Discussion of potential TA resources and goals for the August 6 Work Group meeting

- Laura discussed resources on TA for consumer-run organizations, noting that the information from Ontario sent out in her recent email to the group was particularly valuable; she highlighted several helpful resources (California Network of Mental Health Clients, On Our Own in Maryland, Ohio Advocates for Mental Health, and the Oklahoma Consumer Council).
- Laura recommended that this group contact Paolo del Vecchio regarding information on TA resources nationally and solicit his help in determining which TA resources can be of assistance.
- Laura noted that it would be helpful to take a look at how national centers have targeted technical assistance and see if their approaches would be a good fit at the state level.
- Brad noted that we should be sure to choose examples that are a good fit for Washington. Small states without the challenges of geography in a Western state may not be as good fits.
- Laura recommended contacting Amy Colasanté with the Mental Health Empowerment Project (MHEP) in New York State as a resource and model for statewide TA. MHEP is not a statewide consumer network, but instead is a consumer-run TA resource.
- Laura also discussed the success of On Our Own of Maryland in providing TA. Along with approaches in Ohio and Oklahoma, Laura noted that the model of providing TA through a statewide consumer organization had many strengths. On Our Own has been around 25 years, and their process development may be of interest. Mike Finkel is their director and has been all along. He is very rigorous in his tracking and record keeping. On Our Own may help in forming our vision for where groups in Washington would like to be some day.
- Brad brought up the point he had made on the last Work Team call that it would be important to figure out what is happening with WIMHRT and the TA branch they had developed through the Mental Health Transformation project. WIMHRT had developed TA resources to support a statewide consumer group under development last year (WHEN). That statewide group did not continue and the status of the TA from WIMHRT is not clear. Mary shared her concerns that statewide TA centers could replicate problems experienced with WIMHRT. She and Brad noted that WIMHRT's role may be an issue for some, noting that it is not a consumer-run organization.
- Brad noted that it would be helpful to contact a non-mental health related TA center as another resource for this group. **Brad is aware of some centers that help non-profits more broadly. Brad will attempt to identify one or two centers for follow-up.**

Discussion of goals for the group to prepare for August 6 Work Group meeting

- Laura suggested that the group consider how certification can be viewed as a continuum (from funding through grants to CMS certification) and use this perspective when looking at TA.
- Brad referenced the challenges and compromises the Passages program in Spokane has gone through, and recommended that this group contact Becky Bates for insight and guidance.



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- Brad also suggested that TA has to focus on starting and growing consumer-run agencies and encouraged that the vision of these services not be compromised through the process of billing, certification, etc.
- Mary shared that she would like to see TA implemented at the local level. She envisioned a state or regional level entity taking on TA and working directly with local consumer-run organizations.
- Based on her experience with TA on the national level, Laura believes that the Work Group can be creative regarding territory that has not been covered in other states. She believes the biggest challenge for consumer-run organizations – and one of the strongest TA needs – will be financial management. Laura also noted that there may be value in evaluating what TA works in WA.
- Brad offered three reasons why consumer-run organizations fail: 1) leadership fails; 2) organizations do not know how to handle finances, and 3) organizations do not stay current with the needs of their customers/consumers. He noted the importance of TA center helping consumer-run organizations understand how to run and sustain a business.
- Brad proposed the idea of having two consumer-run TA centers in the state, one on the east side and another in the west, which could best meet varied needs of rural, suburban and urban communities.
- Laura reinforced the idea of developing grass-roots TA at the local level, assuring that staffing (and board membership) is representative of local communities. Brad supported this idea and suggested linking local initiatives with two main TA centers for resources and support.
- Group members processed differences in definitions between consumer-run and consumer-delivered services and explored possible ways to develop collaborative approaches (e.g., one agency oversee fiscal or evaluation responsibilities for a self-governed consumer-run entity).

Discussion of the STI paper's section on Centers of Excellence and determine if it is applicable to this subgroup's efforts

- Andy noted that the STI paper did not propose a particular entity to develop a TA center for peer support, but did assume that a consumer-run group would take this on.
- He also confirmed for Laura that the TriWest STI paper did not involve any consumer authors.

Next steps

- Andy, Mary and Brad will contact two national TA centers (Andy will make initial contacts and then coordinate a time with Mary and Brad). Andy will contact Paolo del Vecchio (phone number: 240-276-1946) to get input from which states are a best fit to support Washington's efforts. Andy will about find out about groups that have been most successful in developing local initiatives across a continuum and then obtaining input (and potential help) from 2-3 groups that might serve as good models for efforts in Washington State, coordinating with Brad and Mary so the three of them can meet with the TA providers by phone together. They may contact Amy Colasanté from MHEP in New York and/or someone from On Our Own (MD), depending on input from Paolo.
- Andy will contact Becky Bates with the Passages program in Spokane to get input from her.
- Andy will contact Maria Monroe-DeVita with WIMHRT to get input from her.
- Brad will identify non-mental health options for consideration.

Next meeting

- The group reviewed potential times to meet and followed-up by email. Andy will send out a couple potential times to the group to decide on by email.

